

The rest of the Hepatitis B vaccinations will need to be given at your GP surgery. Please contact your GP to book your child in for these in plenty of time. The appropriate schedule will be circled in the 'preventing transmission of Hepatitis' section by the doctor or nurse before your child leaves CED.

## Useful resources

We appreciate that this might be a worrying and stressful time for you.

### NHS advice on needlestick injuries

is available here: <https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/accidents-first-aid-and-treatments/what-should-i-do-if-i-injure-myself-with-a-used-needle/>

Or use the QR code



### CHIVA – The Children's HIV association

website provides lots of information, including on needlestick injuries and counselling services, via this link:

<https://www.chiva.org.uk/>

Or use the QR code



## Useful numbers

### Practice Plus

(Brighton walk-in centre / GP service)

0300 130 3333

Open every day from 8am to 8pm, including bank holidays.

[www.practiceplusbrightonstation.nhs.uk/](http://www.practiceplusbrightonstation.nhs.uk/)

### For out of hours GP service or advice ring

NHS 111

### Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital

Children's Emergency Department

01273 696955 Ext. 62593

Please be aware that CED staff will not be able to give you medical advice for your child over the phone but can direct you to an appropriate service to assist with your enquiry

Produced by the Children's Emergency Department  
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the  
**alex**

# Needlestick Injury



## What is a needlestick injury?

Your child has been pricked by a needle that is commonly used to inject medication or drugs. This is also known as a 'sharps injury', and is different to being pricked by a sewing machine needle for example, as it carries a very small risk of transmitting certain blood borne virus infections.

We understand that it can be a very worrying time for you, but you should know that the risk of catching serious infections such as HIV from needle stick injuries in children is very low. There is, however, a small risk of your child being exposed to the Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C infection, which is why we take needlestick injuries seriously.

## Does my child need any tests?

During their visit to CED today, your child will need to have some blood tests. These tests are routine, and are done to check your child's current HIV and hepatitis status.

We will always ask for your consent to take these tests, because although we expect them to be negative at the outset, we appreciate that an unexpected result may have a significant impact on your child and you.

The test results can take up to a week to come back, so one of our doctors will make a plan to call you with the result. If we get a result that is unexpected,

we will always make an appointment for you and your child to see a specialist to discuss the results in more detail.

## Does my child need any treatment?

### Preventing transmission of Hepatitis

Any needlestick injury that breaches the skin is considered a Hepatitis risk. Your child will receive a course of Hepatitis B vaccinations to reduce this risk.

The first vaccine will be given in CED today and you will need to book follow up appointments with your GP for the remaining vaccinations. These will need to be either in:

- A) 1 month and in 6 months, or**
- B) 1 month, 2 months and 12 months**

We will let you know today which schedule to follow.

Unfortunately at present there is no recognised treatment to reduce the risk of contracting Hepatitis C after a needlestick injury. Usually a watch and wait approach is taken, depending on the risk of transmission.

In the unlikely event of your child developing Hepatitis C however, treatment is increasingly successful.

### Preventing transmission of HIV

As the risk of getting HIV from a needlestick injury is very low most of the time, we have to balance the risk of the

side effects of the medication to prevent transmission, with the risks of your child developing HIV.

Common side effects of the medication include nausea and vomiting, diarrhoea, and headache, but they can sometimes cause more serious effects such as liver inflammation or nerve damage.

If we think there is a high enough risk of transmission however, we will discuss the options with you and your child. If we agree to go ahead with the medication (called post-exposure prophylaxis or PEP), your child will have a 28 day course of the tablets.

The first 5 days of the course will be prescribed from CED and the rest will be prescribed at a follow up appointment which will be organised with you before your child goes home today.

## What will happen after today?

We will arrange with you to repeat the blood tests in 3 months' time, and will again contact you with the results. However unlikely, 3 months is the soonest we can tell from blood tests if your child has contracted any of the mentioned viruses.

If your child has started HIV post-exposure prophylaxis today, we will organise an appointment in 3 days' time and also in 3 months for your child to see a specialist in the out-patient clinic.